(b) As per the records available with IBM, there are about 17 granite processing units in organised sector in Maharashtra.

(c) The foreign exchange earned during the last three years is as follows :—

Year	Value (Rs. crores)
1990-91	227.00
1991-92	418.35*
1992-93	463.64

*(Revised Estimate)

Development and Exploration of Minerals in Rajasthan and Orissa

2368. SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL : Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state :

(a) whether financial assistance from any international agencies had been sought recently by Government of India for the development and exploration of minerals in Rajasthan and Orissa during 1993-94 as well as during the Eighth Five Year Plan;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Union Government have also received suggestions from State Government of Rajasthan and Orissa for automatic and time-bound revision of royalty rate once for all and certain urgent amendments in Mines and Minerals Regulation and Development Act, 1957; and

(d) if so, what are the details thereof and what are the hurdles coming in the way of Union Government in bringing forward suitable legislation during the Monsoon Session of Parliament as already promised by the Minister several times on the floor of the House ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF MINES (SHRI BALRAM SINGH YADAV) : (a) and (b) No, Sir.

(c) and (d) No suggestion has been received from the State Government of Rajasthan and Orissa for automatic and time bound revision of royalty rates once for all. However, in a joint memorandum submitted by the Chief Ministers of Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Himachal Pradesh to the Prime Minister, it was suggested that the Sarkaria Commission's recommendation to reduce the period specified in the Mines and Minerals (Regulation and Development) Act, 1957 between two revisions of royalty rates should be accepted and powers to revise the royalty rates of major minerals should vest with the State Government rather than the Central Government.

Action for amending the Mines and Minerals (Regulation and Development) Act, 1957 is in hand.

Setting of Joint Ventures for Mining with France

2369. SHRI SURESH KALMADI :
SHRI KAMAL MORARAKA :
Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that India and France have agreed to facilitate the setting up of joint ventures in their territories and 3rd countries in the field of mining and mining consultancy;

(b) what are the sectors and areas of operation likely to be thrown open for the ventures;

(c) whether the agreement includes transfer of technology; and

(d) if so, the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF MINES (SHRI BALRAM SINGH YADAV) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (d) The protocol signed between the two countries anticipates possibilities of taking up projects which are economically viable at international prices and conditions such as projects for base metals, nickel, gold and fertiliser minerals. Both sides agreed to avail the varied and extensive opportunities for pooling up the expertise, experience and resources of both the countries to set up joint ventures in India and France and third countries on mutually beneficial terms.

Monsoon Session Abnormally Delayed

2370. SHRI SATISH PRADHAN : Will the Minister of PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Monsoon Session this year is abnormally delayed than the usual date as convening the Mansoon Session; and

(b) if so, what are reasons attributed to this delay ?

THE MINISTER OF WATER RESOURCES AND THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI VIDYACHARAN SHUKLA) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.